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NORTH IMPLICATED IN CONTRA SUPPLY THROUGH PORTUGAL

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 9 — Congressional investigators have found evidence that Lieut. Col. Oliver L. North coordinated many arms shipments to the Nicaraguan rebels through Portugal, according to Congressional sources.

The disclosure calls into question repeated denials by the White House of charges that Reagan Administration officials were defying the Congressional ban on direct or indirect aid to the rebels, who are known as contras.

It also comes as details of the unreleased Senate Intelligence Committee report on the Iran-contra affair are being made public by political supporters and opponents of the Administration.

Unauthorized Release Denounced

Senator David L. Boren, the Oklahoma Democrat who is the new chairman of the committee, today denounced the unauthorized release to NBC News of the first draft of the report, which he said was incomplete and inaccurate.

That draft was the subject of internal disputes in the committee from the day it was written. It was the work of aides to Senator Dave Durenberger, a Minnesota Republican and former chairman, and was immediately challenged by other staff members.

When an aide to a Democratic Senator discovered that White House officials were reviewing the report in the committee's offices, he demanded that their notes be torn up and their briefcases searched before they left the committee room, to prevent any unauthorized release.

NBC News reported tonight that Maj. Gen. Richard V. Secord, a retired Air Force officer, had kept William J. Casey, the Director of Central Intelligence, fully informed about the progress of the shipments to the Nicaraguan rebels. NBC, quoting an unidentified source, said the C.I.A. directly assisted the supply operation by telling the crews where to drop the weapons, what routes to take and how to avoid Nicaraguan defenses. According to NBC, the C.I.A. station chiefs in Honduras and El Salvador were providing the intelligence information.

Congressional restrictions at the time allowed intelligence sharing with the contras but barred the agency from indirectly or directly assisting rebel military actions.

Congressional investigators said they had uncovered new details about Colonel North's ties to the supposedly private network that was providing military aid to the Nicaraguan rebels.

The investigators found that Colonel North, as a member of the National Security Council staff, had been involved in clandestine arms shipments paid for with money that had been funneled through a Panamanian company.

1985 Incident Recounted

They recounted one incident in early November 1985, in which the Israeli Government was trying to deliver Hawk missiles to Iran by way of Portugal on behalf of the United States. According to American accounts, Al Schwimmer, an Israeli businessman, erred by allowing an Israeli-chartered plane to take off from Israel before landing rights were secured in Portugal. Israeli officials say Colonel North had neglected to obtain the required permission.

In any event, the Israel plane flew halfway to Portugal and then was forced to turn back, on "its last drop of fuel," when Israeli officials said they knew of nowhere else in Europe in which they could land a plane filled

with Hawk missiles, according to Israeli officials.

Colonel North then cast about for a plane to carry the arms to Iran. His first thought, according to Congressional sources, was to consider using a plane being prepared to fly from Lisbon with arms for the contras. This flight was scheduled to make a delivery to Bocay, a Nicaraguan village near the Honduran border that has been the site of contra activities. An airstrip used by the contras is nearby on the Honduran side.

Involvement Was Denied

Asked in October if Colonel North or other Administration officials had been involved in arms shipments to the contras, Elliott Abrams, an Assistant Secretary of State, echoed the remarks of several other Administration officials when he said, "I deny it."

"The intelligence committees have kept looking at it and looking at it," he added, referring to investigations of

the question in 1985. "They have never found anything. There's a reason for that. It's because this is not factual."

A senior Administration official said recently that Portugal had been serving as a primary transshipment point for arms to the contras. A spokesman for the Portuguese Embassy in Washington said tonight that his Government had not authorized any such flights and was not aware of them.

As of November 1985, Congress had barred any agency associated with intelligence activities from directly or indirectly aiding the contras.

But Colonel North has told associates that he believed these restrictions applied only to the spending of Government money and that as a White House aide he was free to help the contras with advice and coordination, according to Congressional investigators.

The investigators' knowledge of how the private supply network operated is sketchy.